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Letter dated 17 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the official statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation on Kosovo, of 17 February 2008 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 86, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Vitaly **Churkin**

08-24378 (E) 190208

Annex to the letter dated 17 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation on Kosovo

17 February 2008

On 17 February, the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government of Kosovo announced the unilateral proclamation of independence of the province. This constituted a violation of the sovereignty of the Republic of Serbia, the Charter of the United Nations, Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), the principles of the Helsinki Final Act, the constitutional frameworks of Kosovo and the high-level agreements of the Contact Group. Russia fully supports the reaction of the leadership of Serbia to events in Kosovo and its justified insistence on the restoration of the territorial integrity of that country.

We expect the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo and the NATO-led forces in Kosovo to take action immediately to fulfil their mandates, as authorized by the Security Council, including the annulment of the decisions of the Institutions of Self-Government in Pristina, and the adoption of severe administrative measures against them. Russia calls for the immediate convening of an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council to examine the situation and to take decisive and concrete measures to return to the political settlement process in accordance with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

It must not be ignored that the decisions of the leadership of Kosovo risk escalating tension and inter-ethnic violence in the province and giving rise to new conflict in the Balkans. The international community must react responsibly to this challenge. Those contemplating supporting separatism must understand that their actions threaten to have dangerous consequences for the decades-old foundations of the world order and international stability, and the authority of the decisions of the United Nations Security Council.